

Investing Time in Your Child: Strategies to Create Special Moments



Life can move at warp speed. If your child is 10 years old, 520 Saturdays have whipped by. Weekends will fly by even quicker once your child becomes a teenager. While there are no brakes to this ride called life, you can discover creative ways to slow down and spend meaningful time with your child.

Finding those special moments may seem challenging when your energy lags after keeping up with the daily routine of extracurricular activities, checking homework and preparing dinner. But that may be the best time to figure out how to create special moments.

Tips to enjoy quality time:

- **Teach each other.** Show your child a dance or share a song that was popular in your childhood. Let him or her return the favor.
- **Park the car and walk** to nearby destinations. Walking may take longer, but spending more time together is the point.
- **Set aside a regular or occasional family date night.** Ask your child to teach you their favorite games. Alternate between playing virtual games and real games such as bowling.
- **Create fun treats.** Make five different types of sundaes or popcorn. Or create different themes for dinner such as Seafood Saturday or Mexican Food Monday. Develop the menus and shop for the food together.
- **Talk at bedtime.** Read to your child or just cuddle.
- **Unplug.** Create a period of time or set aside a day when no one can use any technology.
- **Camp out in an unusual part of the house.** Use the living room for a family sleepover.

Spending quality time with your child does not have to require spending a lot of money. Invest your energy, imagination and organization into the time you have for rewarding and memorable experiences.



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1-800-552-7096 Virginia Child Abuse Hotline (language line available)
800-Children (800-244-5373) Parent Helpline

How Well Do You Know Your Child?

While juggling many responsibilities each day to take care of your family, sometimes it is easy to overlook your child's interests and activities. Do you know what tickles your child's funny bone?

Take this short quiz and think about sharing your answers with your son or daughter. Make it a family activity and consider asking your child to take a test on how well they know their parents. But first, grab a pen and remember, your child takes tests all the time in school. Now, it's your turn.

1. How did your child meet his or her best friend?
2. What makes your child laugh hysterically?
3. What is your child's favorite website?
4. What embarrasses your child the most?
5. Where was your child's favorite vacation?
6. What physical trait is your child most self-conscious about?
7. What two subjects challenge your child the most at school?
8. Excluding parents, who are your child's role models?
9. Who are your child's top three musical artists or groups?
10. What is your child's favorite color or article of clothing?
11. Has your child ever been bullied in person or on the Internet?
12. When was the last time your child was really happy?
13. What was the last book your child read for pleasure?
14. What is your child's favorite video game?
15. Who is your child's favorite relative?
16. What does your child love the most about his or her parents?
17. What has been the saddest day in your child's life?
18. Who is your child's favorite author? Or actor?
19. What is your child's nickname among friends?
20. What is your child's proudest accomplishment?

